

Guide to Obtaining Assistive Technology for People Using the Elderly or Disabled with Consumer Direction (EDCD) Waiver

This guide is written to help you better understand what assistive technology is, how you can find out if you qualify, how much money you can spend, and how you can get the technology you need.

What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive technology is any special medical equipment, supply, device, control, and or another appliance that will help you function in and communicate with the environment in which you live. You may need assistive technology to live in the community instead of an institution. All assistive technology devices must be portable.

How much money can I spend on Assistive Technology?

Each calendar year, you can spend up to \$5,000 for any pre-approved assistive technology that you need. You must buy the least expensive and the most cost-effective type of assistive technology that fits your needs. You cannot carry over costs for assistive technology from year to year, you cannot duplicate it, and you must get prior authorization (approval) before you buy assistive technology. Assistive technology must be purchased through an approved Medicaid provider.

How do I qualify?

In order to qualify for the \$5,000 per year assistive technology benefit, you must be using the Elderly or Disabled with Consumer Direction (EDCD) Home and Community Based Waiver. Additionally, your need must be documented in your service plan. Your service plan is reviewed each year as you receive support through the EDCD Waiver. In order to be eligible for assistive technology, you must use at least one other EDCD waiver service.

How do I begin the process?

In order to begin the process you will need to:

- Determine your assistive technology needs/desires;
- Obtain the necessary evaluations with written recommendations from an occupational therapist, physical therapist, physician, or rehabilitation engineer; and,
- Based on the recommendations which outline your needs, you must choose a Medicaid approved provider and get a price quote from them. (Please see the information below to help you find an approved provider.)

Who can assist me with getting my assistive technology?

If you receive supports and services through the EDCD waiver, you may have a transition coordinator or service facilitator who will help you through the prior authorization process and will help make arrangements for you to get the assistive technology that you need.

If you do not have a transition coordinator or service facilitator who works with you, you must contact your primary care doctor to begin the process. Your doctor (and physical, speech, or occupational therapist, if needed) will be able to help you determine what you need and what

types of assistive technology will help you live safely in the community. They will need to give you documentation that shows that buying assistive technology is necessary for you to live successfully in the community.

In order to begin this process, you will need to find a provider who can sell you the Assistive Technology that you need. You can access this information on the internet at www.dmas.virginia.gov/ltc-home.htm#Waiver_Services_Program or www.olmsteadva.com/mfp. If you are unable to get the information you need from the internet, you may call DMAS at 804-225-4222 and request a provider list.

Once you choose a provider, you will need to contact the provider to explain what you need and to get a price quote.

What should I expect out of a price quote?

Once you have your provider list from DMAS, you must call the provider you choose and ask for a quote for the assistive technology you need. You do not have to call more than one provider, but you may want to in order to get the best price.

When you get a quote from a provider, the quote should contain all of the following information:

- Your name and Medicaid number;
- The assistive technology for which you are asking;
- The cost for the assistive technology and the cost for any labor; and,
- The provider's name and Medicaid provider number.

Do I need prior authorization from the state Medicaid agency (the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)) before I get my assistive technology?

Yes, you will need to get prior authorization from DMAS before you can buy assistive technology. This process ensures that your request will best suit your individual needs and that Medicaid can pay for the requested assistive technology.

How do I get prior authorization (or approval)?

The provider you choose to work with will need to get prior authorization before you can buy assistive technology. DMAS currently contracts with KePRO, a company that handles all requests for prior authorization.

If you or your provider have questions about the prior authorization process, you can reach KePRO by email at providerissues@kepro.org or by phone at 1-888-827-2884. You or your provider can also contact DMAS by email at PAUR06@dmas.virginia.gov or by phone at 804-225-3639

Is there any other paperwork that needs to be completed?

Prior to approval by KePRO, each assistive technology item must be recommended and determined appropriate to meet your needs by the following professionals. Your primary care physician will assist you with setting up any appointments you may need.

Examples of Assistive Technology Devices (not a comprehensive list)	Professional Assessment Required
Computer/Software or Communication Device	Speech Language Pathologist or Occupational Therapist
Organizational Devices, such as day planners, personal digital assistants	Occupational Therapist, Psychologist, or Psychiatrist
Orthotics, such as braces	Physical Therapist or Physician
Other Specialized Devices/Equipment	Physician, Speech Language Pathologist, Physical therapist, or Occupational Therapist depending on the device or equipment
Support Chairs	Physical Therapist or Occupational Therapist
Specially Designed Utensils for Eating	Occupational Therapist or Speech Language Pathologist
Specialized Toilets	Occupational Therapist or Physical Therapist
Weighted Blankets/Vests	Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist
Writing Orthotics, such as specialized pens, eating utensils	Occupational Therapist or Speech language Pathologist

If you do not see the item or items that you need in the list above, or if you have a specific request, contact DMAS (804-225-4222) for assistance with determining the appropriate professional to make the recommendation. Someone at your local doctor's office should also be able to help you.

Your assistive technology provider (or transition coordinator or service facilitator, if you have one) must fill out the necessary paperwork for completing a prior authorization (approval) request. This includes the DMAS 98 Community Based Care Waiver Request Form, a price quote, and any documents that justify your need for assistive technology. Requests for prior authorization to KePRO may be done by fax, iEXCHANGE, phone, or mail.

Once my request for prior authorization is turned in, how long will it take for me to hear from them?

KePRO will process your request within 15 business days. Once a decision has been made, they will contact your assistive technology provider. Your provider should contact you with information about the decision.

How are authorizations processed?

Once your request has been submitted for prior authorization to KePRO, their doctors and health professionals evaluate and determine if the request can be approved. If the request is approved, you and your provider can make arrangements to buy your assistive technology.

What do I do if my request for prior authorization is denied?

If your request for prior authorization is denied, and you do not agree with the denial, you have the right to file an appeal within 30 days of the written notification being received. You can appeal by sending either:

- A written appeal request or
- An Appeal Request Form. You can find the request form on the internet at www.dmas.virginia.gov, or by calling (804) 371- 8488.

In either case, you should send the written appeal to:

Appeals Division
Department of Medical Assistance Services
600 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

You may also fax your appeal request to (804) 371- 8491.

You may also want to consider these other ways of getting the assistive technology you want.

The NewWell Program (once called the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority) is a low interest loan program that assists individuals with disabilities in getting the assistive technology they need. This program was designed by individuals who needed equipment to assist in their work, play, education, and life and had difficulty finding the money to purchase these items. Many had no credit history or poor credit due to their disability or health issues. You can apply to the NewWell Fund, regardless of income and no matter how small a loan you might need. Credit history, current income and existing debt will determine if your application is approved. NewWell makes loans for adaptive vans and modified vehicles, home modifications, hearing aids, and more. You can contact this program by:

- Toll-free phone number: 1-866-835-5976
- E-Mail at atlfa@atlfa.org
- Fax Number: (804) 662-9533
- Website: www.atlfa.org

Recycling programs for assistive technology devices are available for individuals who have the resources to purchase the assistive technology they need. For this program, gently-used devices are donated by the public, cleaned, repaired and given to individuals who need it. These devices include wheelchairs, both manual and power; canes; scooters; walkers; tub benches; shower chairs; hospital chairs; and bedside commodes. Most of the available devices are for adults, though some programs are beginning to have devices for children. There are currently 11 programs operating in localities across Virginia. Information about available programs can be found at <http://www.vats.org/atrecycling.htm>

What if I have general questions or concerns?

If you would like to speak with someone about your request for assistive technology, you should call either the provider you have chosen to work with or DMAS at 804-225-4222.